

Toronto Anarchist Black Cross

Newsletter #3, October 1987

LINDA PARKS ARRESTED!

Linda Parks, civil rights activist, prisoner support worker, feminist, publisher of Woman to Woman, active member of the Survival Network, and contributor to Bayou La rose and the Survival Network Newsletter, was arrested on February 1, 1987 on a charge TEN YEARS OLD!! For ten years Linda has been a fugitive and she never let this stop her from her work of aiding women in prison. But now she needs our help.

The charge now: "fleeing to escape prosecution." The original charge stemming from a hate-filled and jealous oriented father, listed the number one fact was that Linda was a Lesbian. That fact alone is what has kept the state of Kansas in a frenzy and add to that her work, determination and courage, and you have a vendetta!

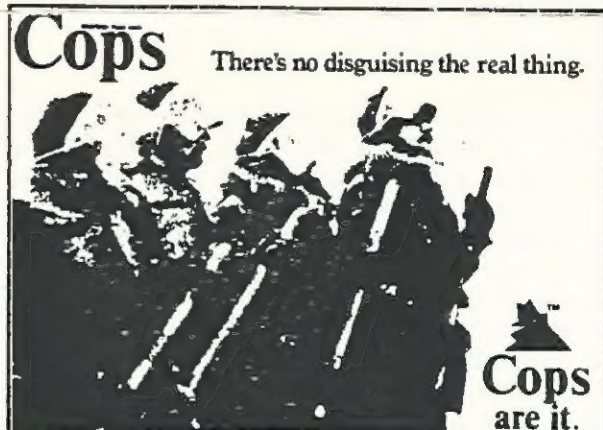
Linda was arrested in Independence, Kansas on November 17, 1977. The charge brought by an irate father, was "KIDNAPPING" and 18-year old woman, a close friend. The kidnapping was in fact a friendly visit. When arrested Linda and the friend were two blocks from, the woman's home, as they sat talking, parked in a lighted parking lot of an open Safeway Store. They were waiting for the public telephone to be free, when they were surrounded by many police cars, and officers jumped out with shotguns pointed at both women. The enraged father was immediately at the scene shouting, "Throw the book at her." He was an influential and well-known member of the Independence community, and of course, a personal friend of both the police chief and the County Attorney. The time was approximately 7pm. By 9pm Linda had been arrested, had a "hearing" and was ordered to the State Mental Hospital in Osowatomic, Kansas, without so much as a medical determination of any sort. In that place of horrors, she witnessed events that led her into the work she does today.

In February of 1978 all charges were dismissed and she was ordered to leave the State of Kansas and never return. She left and went to Lake Charles, La. to return to school at the university there. Meanwhile, she attempted to get an investigation into the legal-system in Independence. She attempted to get the Governor's help, and the state Attorney General, however, all she did was inflame the County Attorney again, with her charges of wrong-doings, and conspiracy. She was again arrested on the old charges and though she had been ordered to leave Kansas in 1978, and all charges had in fact been dismissed by the District Court, the arrest warrant listed her as "fleeing to avoid prosecution." The date listed was November 19, 1977, when she was in fact within the confines of the hospital.

However, the facts did not matter, only the vendetta of the county Attorney mattered and she was taken back to Kansas in chains. Three armed guards came for her, they bound her in leg irons, belly chain, and handcuffs also locked to the belly chain. They kept her like this for the entire 600 mile trip from Lake Charles to Independence, and even threatened "to shoot you if you try to escape." The irony of this extradition is the fact that both the County Attorney and the Assistant County Attorney had flown down to Lake Charles just to sit and gloat during the extradition hearing. It was obvious to everyone what was going on!

Linda was bonded out to the Independence jail after spending almost three months in solitary confinement. The County Attorney made sure her jail time was as miserable as possible. She lost an incredible 30 pounds in only two months. She was ill and finally got a doctor to come in, after a plea to the judge. She had no shower available and was constantly ridiculed and threatened by jailers. LESBIAN was marked on her file for all to see and therefore, the abuse! She was injured by a trustee who pulled her up to the bars in an attempt to have sexual contact, three ribs were literally torn apart from this attack. The sheriff did nothing about it and did not believe she was hurt. Linda was ordered to have a psychological evaluation this time, and in tests by both a psychologist and a psychiatrist, she was given a clean bill of mental health. In fact, the psychiatrist asked her, "How have you kept your sanity through all this?" Everyone recognized the fact that she was being treated very differently from other inmates at this jail! No one did anything.

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Tim Goodwin Released

Good news finally in the case of Timothy Owen Goodwin, the gay imprisoned activist we reported on in ABC newsletter #2. Although we don't have many details, we know that he faced a parole board at the end of August and has now been paroled. This is very good news as while in prison he was subjected to many injustices. Congratulations also on his recent marriage (!), which no doubt made the board sure that they'd successfully "corrected" him.

OMORI UPDATE

Katsuhisa Omori is still facing execution in Japan and his death looms ever closer after 11 years of imprisonment. For background info on the Omori case, write to us and we'll send you a basic package.

In the 39th trial on May 7th this year the court rejected all requests for an examination of the evidence, then arbitrarily appointed August 18 and 19 as the dates of the lawyer's final opinion statements (this was later postponed to September 9, 10, and 11). Omori and his lawyer (as well as loud supporters in the

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PARKS (cont.)

Linda was bonded out. Her bond was reduced from an absurd \$100,000 to \$20,000 and the court gave her permission to return to Lake Charles to await trial, so she could take finals at the university.

She had a "court-appointed" attorney in Kansas, and hired a lawyer in Louisiana to go with her to protect her from Kansas railroading tactics. The Kansas attorney did not cooperate with the Louisiana attorney, balked at every request and would not file a single motion, or talk to a single witness for the defense. At the request of the La. attorney, Linda asked the court to remove her Kansas attorney and provide another who would work for her. The trial was postponed several times without her knowing why. She had not requested it; she was anxious to get it over with. She was in Lake Charles from March 1980 until July, 1980 before the court in Kansas ordered her to appeal at her attorney's withdrawal hearing. This was only a few days before the actual trial. Then, without warning or explanation, her Louisiana attorney withdrew, leaving her alone. Later, Linda obtained some letters of correspondence between the Kansas attorney and the Louisiana attorney and they proved without a doubt a conspiracy - neither had any intention of defending her in court and both wrote derogatory remarks about her and her friend.

At this time, the wife of the Louisiana attorney called Linda and told her that she must not go to Kansas - she told her that it was a set-up and that she would only be arrested and there would be no trial. Using fear, the woman who acted as a friend to Linda, encouraged and helped her to leave. As the woman said, "You need time to go by before you can hope for justice."

Linda did leave. However, she could not go through with the plan. Instead she flew to Tulsa, OK and friends took her to Independence, about 80 miles away. She went to the attorney's office and was immediately arrested and transported to Osowatomie by FBI agents. Later, she discovered by investigation that it was not FBI - but probably members of the sheriff's office who took her. There was no hearing this time - not even a facade of one.

Linda managed to get a note out to her sister in Missouri that told of her being kept in the hospital. Where her sister went to the hospital, she was told that they could not give any information - it was "confidential." In the meantime, Linda was kept naked tied to a cot, made to endure all sorts of sexual abuses and given drugs to keep her quiet. She finally managed to escape and called the friend in Tulsa who came and got her. She remained with them and then went back to Lake Charles, where she has remained since September, 1980.

Now, again, they charge she "fled to avoid prosecution." They deny she was in fact arrested in Kansas, even though the

OMORI (cont.)

spectator's seats) protested the forcible and arbitrary ways of the court. However, the court didn't change its conclusion and closed the trial.

His supporters are now campaigning for the examination of evidence (evidence which was both misrepresented and false). Judging from past experience, the period from the lawyer's final opinion statement to the judgement is only 2 or 3 months, which puts the final judgement sometime in November. Omori will probably be sentenced to death.

Omori needs support now as much as ever, please write or phone or visit your nearest Japanese consulate and tell them what you think. Also get in touch with:

Omori's support group
PO Box 35, Chitose Post Office, Setagaya-Kua,
Tokyo, Japan.

Lake Charles Police Dept., received definite reports from the Montgomery County Sheriff's Dept. that she "is in custody." Now, they deny even this! Linda has family witnesses to the fact they were told by the police that the sheriff's Dept. in Independence had arrested Linda on the day in question. After so many years, it is difficult to determine what officer reported this - and thus far the police files are not available to us. The proof we need to show that while the "trial" was being held, she was in custody - lies in the files of the Lake Charles Police Dept. and the files of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Dept.

Attorney Mrs. Billie Woodward has accepted the case, based on her personal knowledge of her reputation and a friendship that has developed. She is not going to "throw you to the wolves," as she put it. She said, "It is about time you had someone to speak up for you."

She does not know what the Kansas law is actually charging her with; Louisiana law has no such charge on the books. She wants to go to Kansas to research the case. Again, the problem is the location of Independence, Kansas - no airline services it. It is a tiny town in the middle of nowhere. Money is needed to provide transportation for the attorney, to Kansas for not only the research but for the preliminary hearing and the actual trial.

In Kansas, Linda will not have anyone outside to come bring her the personal items she needs. Her family is in Lake Charles - a daughter and tree grandchildren, who have no funds to help. Her mother and father are deceased. Her life's partner has a job as a nurse to an elderly woman, whom she cannot leave alone to help her friend. Linda and she have agreed that the woman she is caring for cannot be abandoned in this case, even if it means that she must go to Kansas alone. Her attorney will go for the hearing but certainly cannot stay to help Linda with the jail situation.

Linda's work with women in prison is well-known. Her continuing efforts to help others in every part of her life cannot be ignored. We ask for your help and support to ask the court to dismiss the charges and not extradite her back again to face Kansas, and to permit her to continue her life undisturbed. The years of being listed as a fugitive, to have had that hanging over her head all that time is surely enough punishment for the "crime."

Her attorney: Mrs. Billie Woodward, 212 S. Ryan, Lake Charles, LA 70602.

Also write to Gov. Edwin Edwards, who knows of Linda's work and reputation as a civil rights activist; ask him to intervene for her and have a hearing in Lake Charles, where Linda can have some help and not have to be subjected to another long period of solitary confinement. She is now almost 50 years old - and her health is not good. Another trip in chains to Kansas and another long period of isolation could finish her up. We need her!

Write to:
Edwin Edwards,
Governor of Louisiana
P.O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9004
504-342-7015

Send donations and copies of letters to:
Women to Women
P.O. Box 6755, Drew Sta.
Lake Charles, LA 70606
318-439-0246

From Bayou La Rose
P.O. Box 2576,
San Diego, CA.
92112